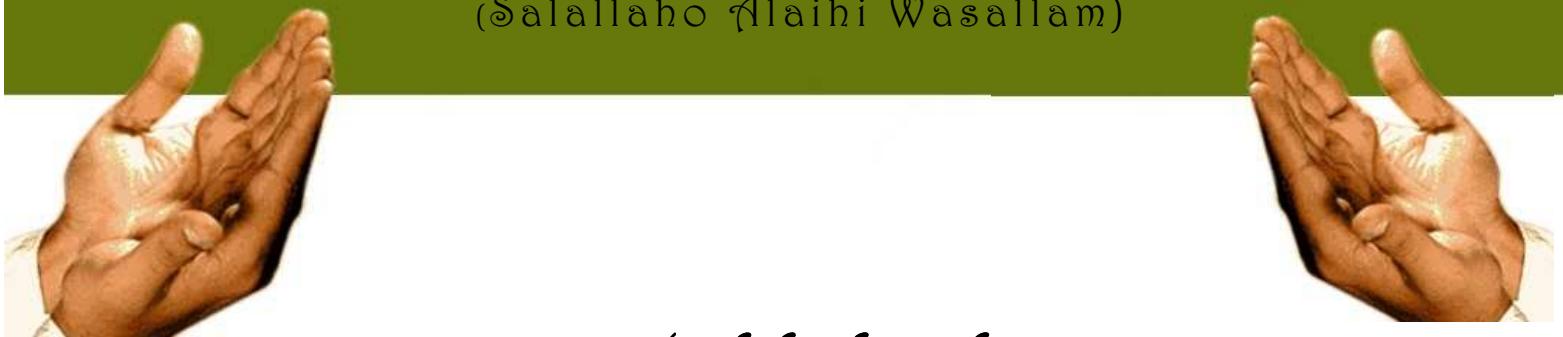


Celebrating Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi

(Salallaho Alaihi Wasallam)



*Imam 'Abd al-Rahman
Jalaluddin al-Suyuti*

March, 2011

**In the name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful**

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Royal Printing Press

Nai Sarak, Srinagar.

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PREFACE

'Abd al-Rahman ibn Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Sabiq al-Din, Jalaluddin al-Suyuti (radi Allahu anhu) was born in 849 A.H./1445. **Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti** also known as Ibn al-Kutub (son of books) was an Egyptian writer, religious scholar, juristic expert and teacher whose works deal with a wide variety of subjects in Islamic theology. He was a Shafi'i Mujtahid Imam, Mufassir, Sufi, Muhammadith - Hadith Master (Hafiz), and historian, a prolific writer who authored books in virtually every Islamic science. He was precocious and was already a teacher in 1462. In 1486, he was appointed to a chair in the mosque of Baybars in Cairo. He adhered to the Shafi'i Madhab and is one of the latter-day authorities of the Shafi'i School, considered to be one of the Ashabun-Nazzar (Assessors) whose degree of *Ijtihad* is agreed upon. He was raised as an orphan in Cairo and memorized the Holy Quran at 8. Amongst his teachers were Siraj al-Din Bulqini, Sharaf al-Din al-Munawi, Taqi al-Din al-Shamani. He travelled to gain Sacred Knowledge to Damascus, the Hijaz, Yemen, India, Morocco, and the land's south of Morocco, as well as centres of learning in Egypt such as Malalla, Dumyat and Fayyum.

He took knowledge of Fiqh and Arabic grammar from a large number of teachers. He studied the laws of inheritance at the hands of the great scholar, who was the most knowledgeable in this subject during his time, Shaikh Shihaab-ud-Deen Al-Shaar Masaabee, who lived to a very old age. He studied his explanation of *Al-Majmoo* under him.

He accompanied 'Ilm al-Din al-Balqini studying Fiqh under him until he died. Ilm-ud-Deen Al-Balqeenee, authorized him to teach and give fatwa in 876H. Likewise, he accompanied Shaikh Sharaf-ud-Deen Al-Manaawee and benefited from him in the fields of Fiqh and Tafsir.

Al-Suyuti moved on to study under Al-Manawee after the death of Ilm-ud-Deen Al-Balqeenee in 878H. Ironically, Sharaf Al-Deen Al-Manaawee was

the grandfather of Abdur-Ra'oof Al-Manaawee, the scholar that wrote the work *Faid-ul-Qadeer*, which was an explanation of As-Suyuti's *Al-Jaami'-us-Sagheer*.

He studied the sciences of Hadith and the Arabic language under the Imam, Taqee-ud-Deen Al-Shumnee Al-Hanafi, who wrote some eulogies for him. He also attended the gatherings of the great scholar, Al-Kaafejee, for the length of fourteen years and learned from him the subjects of *Tafsir*, *Usul al-Fiqh*, and *Ma'aanee*. And he received ijazah, religious authorization, from him. He also benefited from the classes of Saif-ud-Deen Al-Hanafi on *Tafsir* and *Balaghah*, eloquence.

The number of teachers from whom he received ijazah, religious authorization, studied under and heard from reaches one hundred and fifty Shaykhs, as has been compiled by both himself and his student after him, Al-Dawudi, who arranged them in alphabetical order.

In his book *Husn-ul-Muhaadarah*, Al-Suyuti gives the number of teachers who narrated to him from those he heard from and those who gave him the ijazah, saying: "As for my teachers who narrated to me, whom I heard from and who gave me the religious authorization, ijazah, then they are many. I have mentioned them in the lexicon I have compiled about them, and I counted them to number about 150."

In this book, the great scholar has shed light on the historical and legal status of the Meelad Shareef in his own characteristic scholarly style. Before forming any opinion on the status of this booklet in imparting knowledge and benefit, first of all consider the illustrious personality of the author. The highly acclaimed "**Tafsir al-Jalalain**" which he co-authored is still a prescribed textbook in religious institutions and Muslims of all shades of opinion study and teach it, and praise Imam al-Suyuti for this work. Apart from this, his book on **Usul al-Tafsir** called "**al-Itqan fi**

Ulum al- Quran" became an indispensable source of reference for all later works on the subject. "**Al-Badr al-Manshur**", his Tafsir of the Holy Quran is referred to as an exemplary Tafsir. On the characteristics and miracles of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), his work entitled "**al-Kasa'is al-Kubra**" has the distinction of being the foremost on this topic and excerpts from it are to be found in the works on Sirah by eminent Imams and Ulama. It is thus obvious that when such a great religious luminary takes up his pen to write on the Meelad Shareef, i.e. celebrating the Birthday of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), the result will be of a unique status and its every word will be a summary of his vast knowledge of Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, Usul and history. Thus it would form the conclusive verdict of this subject. Imam Jalaluddin al-Suyuti (radi Allahu anhu) passed away in Cairo at 60 years of age in 911A.H./1505.

His books and treatises have been counted to number almost 500 works altogether. Imam Suyuti listed 283 of his own works in *Husn al-Muhađarah*. Some of the more famous works he produced were:

- Tafsir al-Jalalayn
- Al-Jaami' al-Kabîr
- Al-Jaami' al-Saghîr
- Tafsir Dur al-Manthur
- Alfiyyah al-Hadith
- Tadrib al-Rawi
- Tarikh al-Khulafa
- Al-Khulafah Ar-Rashidun)
- Tabaqat al-Huffaz an appendix to al-Dhahabi's Tadhkirat al-Huffaz
- Nuzhat al-Julasā' fī ash'ār al-nisā'
- Khasaais-e-Kubra which mentions the miracles of Muhammad
- Al-Muzhir. (linguistics).
- Sharh Al-Isti'aadha wal-Basmalah

PRAISE BE TO ALLAH AND PEACE ON HIS CHOSEN SERVANTS

The question under consideration is what is the verdict of the Shari'ah on celebrating the Holy Birthday of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal. From the point of view of the Shari'ah, is this a praiseworthy action or a blameworthy one? And do those who arrange such a celebration receive blessings or not?

THE OCCASION OF HAPPINESS

The reply to this question is that in my view the Meelad Shareef, Celebration of the Birthday of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) is in fact such an occasion of happiness on which people assemble and recite the Holy Quran to the extent that is easy. Then they relate the prophecies concerning the appearance of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) that have been transmitted in Ahadith and Athar, and the miraculous events and signs that took place on his birth. Then food is set before them and according to their desire they partake thereof to satisfaction. This festival of celebrating the birthday of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), is a Bid'ah Hasanah (a good innovation) and those arranging it will get blessings, since in such a celebration is found the expression of joy and happiness at the greatness and eminence of the Noble Prophet (salall laahu alaihi wasallam) at his birth.

HISTORY OF THE MEELAD SHAREEF

The beginning of the celebration of the Meelad Shareef in its present form lies with the ruler of Irbil, Sultan Muzaffar whose full name is Abu Saeid Kukabri Ibn Zain al-Din Ali Ibn Baktagin, who is counted among the great Sultans and generous leaders. He was responsible for many other noble works as well. Among the many monuments set up by him was the Jami Muzaffari, which he had constructed near Mount Tasiyun. Ibn Kathir (radi Allahu anhu) writes about Sultan Muzaffar as follows: "Sultan Muzaffar

used to arrange the celebration of the Meelad Shareef with due honour, glory, dignity and grandeur. In this connection, he used to organise a magnificent festival. He was a pure-hearted, brave and wise Aalim and a just ruler. May Allah shower His Mercy on him and grant him an exalted status. Sheikh Abu al-Khattab Ibn Dhiyah also wrote a book for him on the Meelad Shareef entitled 'al-Tanwir fi Mawlid al-Bashir al-Nadhir' (Enlightenment on the Birthday of the Bearer of Good News, the Warner). For this book Sultan Muzaffar awarded him a gift of one thousand dinars. Sultan Muzaffar remained the ruler until his death, which occurred in 630 A.H. in the city of 'Akka when he had the Europeans under seige. In short he was a man of piety and noble disposition". Sibt Ibn al-Jauzi (radi Allahu anhu) wrote in "Mir'at al-Zaman" that one participant in the Meelad Shareef organized by Sultan Muzaffar states that on the royal table-spread were laid out five hundred prepared goats, ten thousand chickens, one hundred thousand earthen tumblers and thirty thousand baskets of sweet fruits. He further writes that eminent pious Ulama and illustrious Sufis used to attend the Meelad Shareef ceremony held by the Sultan, who used to honour them with robes of distinction and royal favour. For the Sufis there used to be a Mahfil-e-Sama from Zuhr until Fajr, in which the Sultan himself used to participate and derive ecstasy there-from together with the Sufis. Every year his expenditure on the Meelad Shareef amounted to three hundred thousand dinars. For those coming from outside (the city) he had a special guest house commissioned, where people from all walks of life used to come from different places and without any discrimination of status. The expenditure of that guest house used to be one hundred thousand dinars annually. Similarly, he used to spend two hundred thousand dinars annually to ransom Muslim prisoners-of-war from the Europeans. Also for the maintenance of the two Harams and for providing water along the routes in Hijaz (for pilgrims), he used to spend three thousand dinars annually. These are in addition to the Sadaqat and charity that used to be given secretly. His wife, Rabi'ah

Khatoon Bint Ayyub, the sister of Sultan Nasir Salahuddin narrates that her husband used to wear a garment (Qamis) of coarse cotton costing no more than five dirhams. She says that she once rebuked him for this, upon which he replied that his wearing a five-dirham garment and spending the rest of the money in charity is far better than wearing a costly garment and giving a poor or indigent person mere good wishes.

THE FIRST BOOK ON THE MEELAD SHAREEF

Ibn Khallikan wrote in the biographical sketch of Hafiz Abu al-Khattab Ibn Dihyah: "He was one of the pious Ulama and famous scholars. He travelled from Morocco to Syria and Iraq. In the year 654 A.H. he passed through the area of Irbil, where he saw that its ruler, the eminent Sultan Muzaffar al-Din Ibn Zainal-Din arranged for celebrating the Birthday of the Prophet. So he wrote the book 'Kitab al-Tanwir fi Mawlid al-Bashir al-Nadhir' for the Sultan and himself read it out to him. I myself heard the book read out in six sittings at the Sultan's place in 625 A.H."

AL-FAKIHANI'S ESSAY REJECTING THE MEELAD SHAREEF

Sheikh Tajuddin Umar Ibn Ali al-Khumi al-Iskandari, well known as al-Fakihani, has claimed that the Meelad Shareef is a reprehensible Bid'ah (innovation). In this regard, he wrote an essay entitled "al-Mawrid fi-l-Kalam ala-l- Mawlid" (The origin in Discussion about the Birthday of the Prophet).

REFUTATION OF THE FOREGOING ESSAY

Now consider may discussion on what al-Fakihani has said in this brief essay. In connection with this statement that he could not find any basis for the Meelad Shareef in the Quran and the Sunnah, our submission is that the negation of the knowledge of a thing does not necessarily imply the negation of the existence of that thing (i.e. someone not having knowledge of a thing does not necessarily mean that that thing does not in reality exist). The Imam of the Huffaz, Abdul Fadl Ahmad Ibn Hajar

(radi Allahu anhu) has extracted a basis for the Meelad Shareef from the Sunnah. One more basis I have extracted, which will be mentioned later. Al-Fakihani has stated that the Meelad Shareef is an innovation invented by useless and idle people, who are slaves of their stomachs and on whom the lower desires of the Nafs predominate. Further, having explained the different kinds of rules he stated that it is neither Wajib, nor Mandub, since neither did the Shari'ah demand it nor did the Sahabah, the Tabi'un and the Ulama of the early generations celebrate it. In this connection we say, as stated earlier, that it was a just Sultan who was an Alim who started the Meelad Shareef with the objective of obtaining nearness to Allah. There were many Ulama and pious people with him, yet none of them deemed it reprehensible. On the contrary, Ibn Dihyah (such an eminent Alim of that time) liked the celebration of the Meelad Shareef, and wrote a book for the Sultan on this subject (as mentioned earlier). These were all Ulama of the earlier generations who liked the Meelad Shareef, who supported and confirmed it and did not criticise or refute it. (This is itself a selfevident proof that al-Fakihani's allegations are wrong). Then there remains his statement that the Meelad Shareef is not even Mandub in reality, which the Shari'ah has demanded. In this regard our submission is that the demand of the Shari'ah is known sometimes through a Nass (an explicit textual statement in the Quran or in the Hadith literature) and sometimes through Qiyas (analogical deduction). For the Meelad Shareef, although no Nass is to be found, yet from those two bases in the Sunnah which are mentioned further on, Qiyas can definitely be made (i.e., when Qiyas is applied on those two bases the commendability – being Mandub – of the Meelad Shareef can be realised).

DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF BID'AH (INNOVATION)

His statement that the Meelad Shareef can also not be Mubah because the Ijma' of the followers of Islam is that anything that is a Bid'ah (innovation) in religion cannot be Mubah, is one that is not accepted. This is because Bid'ah (innovations) are not classified only as Haraam or Makruh, but they can also be Mubah as well as Mandub or Wajib. Imam al-Nawawi (radi Allahu anhu) says in "Tahdhib al-Asma wal Lugat": "Bid'ah in the Shari'ah is the invention of that which was not there in the period of the Messenger of Allah, and it is divided into two categories, Hasanah (or good) and Qabihah (or evil)." Shaikh Izzuddin Ibn Abd al-Salaam (radi Allahu anhu) writes in "al-Qawa'id": "Bid'ah is divided into Wajib, Haraam, Mandub, Makruh and Mubah. And the way to know to which category it belongs is to examine it together with the laws of Shari'ah. If it falls with those laws that deal with what is Wajib, then it is Wajib; if with those laws that deal with what is Haraam, then it is Haraam; if with the laws dealing with what is Mandub, then Mandub; if the laws dealing with what is Makruh, then Makruh; if with the laws dealing with what is Mubah, then Mubah". After this he went on to give examples of the five kinds of Bid'ah and wrote: "As for Bid'ah that is Mandub, its examples are the setting up of inns and educational institutions and very good action which was not there in the first age. Among the latter are Tarawih, discussion on the intricacies of Tasawwuf and debates. And among these is the convening of assemblies for deduction of laws in connection with problems providing that the motive thereof is to seek the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala". Al-Baihaqi (radi Allahu anhu) in "Manaqib al-Shafi'i" has transmitted with his isnad (chain of narrators) from Imam al-Shafi'i (radi Allahu anhu) himself, that he said: "The new things that are brought about are of two kinds. One kind is that which is brought about, inconsistent with something in the Quran or the Sunnah or with some Athar or some

Ijma'. This is the category of Bid'ah Dalalah (heretic innovation). The second kind is that which is brought about from good things which are not inconsistent with any of the above". Umar (radi Allahu anhu) did say about standing in prayer in the month of Ramadaan, "What a good Bid'ah this is!" meaning that this is a new thing which was not there before and being a new thing it does not contradict anything that went before.

THE BID'AH THAT IS MANDUB

This refutes al-Fakihani's statement that the Meelad Shareef cannot also be Mubah. But on the contrary it is a Bid'ah that is Makruh. This is because the Meelad Shareef is of that category of new matters which involve no inconsistency with anything in the Quran or the Sunnah, or with any Athar or Ijma'. Thus, this is not blameworthy (i.e. from the point of view of the Shari'ah, there is no evil in it), as in the statement of Imam al-Shafi'i (radi Allahu anhu) and it is a good action which, even though (in its present form) was not done in the first age, was brought about afterwards. The invitation to partake of food and drink in which there is no sin, is an act of goodness for sure. Therefore, in connection with the Meelad Shareef, that assembly in which someone, out of his lawfully earned wealth, invites his family, relatives and friends to partake of food and drink in which there is no action against the Shari'ah – that assembly is a Bid'ah (innovation) that is Mandub (commendable), as is clear from the above quoted statements of Shaikh Izzuddin Ibn Abd al-Salam (radi Allahu anhu).

HARAAM AND MAKRUH THINGS

In connection with the second manner al-Fakihani has described and criticised, his criticism is in itself correct. There is no doubt that the assembly (mahfil) is Haraam where men, women, youths and little boys are freely mixed, and which there is dancing and music, with musical instruments in busy use, or where women assemble separately and sing in raised voices. But this does not mean that to arrange for the Meelad Shareef has been deemed Haraam. On the contrary, in the above instances the reason for their being Haraam is not assembling to celebrate the Meelad Shareef but is due to those things which are Haraam in the Shari'ah and have become mixed with the blessed assembly. (And if these things are not indulged in, then the Meelad Shareef would be as assembly for remembering Muhammad Mustafa - sallal laahu alaihi wasallam - and would thus be full of goodness and blessings).

Furthermore, if these kinds of actions were to take place say, in the assembly for Salatul-Jumu'ah, then it is evident that would be a reprehensible step and an evil matter. However from this the criticism of the original assembly for Salatul-Jumu'ah does not necessarily ensue. It has been seen that some of these kinds of actions also take place on the nights of Ramadaan Shareef, when people assemble for Salatut-Tarawih. Now on the basis of those actions can one conceivably criticise assembling for Salatut-Tarawih? Definitely not! However, we will say that the original assembly for Salatut-Tarawih is Sunnah and an act of virtue and Ibadah, but that those above mentioned actions, which have become mixed with it, are evil and repulsive. Similarly, we say in connection with the celebration of the Meelad Shareef that the assembly is itself Mandub (commendable) and an act of virtue, but the above mentioned kinds of other actions, which have become mixed with it, are blameworthy and unlawful.

REFUTATION OF THE FINAL OBJECTION

In conclusion, al-Fakihani stated that Rabi-ul-Awwal is the month not only of the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), but also of his demise. Therefore, instead of grief and sorrow, exhibiting joy and happiness is neither better nor suitable. In reply to this, first of all we submit that the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) is the greatest favour of Allah granted to us, and that his death is the greatest affliction for us. However, the Shari'ah has encouraged us to show our gratitude for favours has taught us to observe patient, perseverance, silence and calm in the face of afflictions. The Shari'ah has ordered us to offer the Aqiqah on the birth of a child, which is an expression of gratitude and happiness on the birth of that child. But the Shari'ah has not ordered us to sacrifice any animal on the death of someone, nor to do any such action. On the contrary, it has prohibited wailing and lamentation. Thus the laws of the Shari'ah indicate that to exhibit happiness in this holy month in connection with the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), is better than showing grief at his demise. Ibn Rajab (radi Allahu anhu) in his "Kitab al-Lata'if" wrote criticising the Rawafid (A Shia sect) that because of the martyrdom of Imam Husain (radi Allahu anhu) they have made Ashura (the 10th of Muharram) a day of mourning, whereas Allah and His Messenger (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), have prohibited taking the days of affliction on the Prophets and the days of their deaths (alaihimus-salaam) as days of mourning. What then is the justification for taking days of mourning for those who are not prophets?

STAND-POINT OF IBN AL-HAJ

Imam Abu Abdullah Ibn al-Haj (radi Allahu anhu) has discussed the subject of the Meelad Shareef with great maturity and insight in his book "al-Madkhal". To sum up his discussion, he has praised celebrating the Meelad Shareef with joy and happiness and exhibiting gratitude to Allah, therefor. And he has criticised those Haraam and prohibited things which have been included in it. Here, I quote his discussion section-wise.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE MEELAD

"From among those innovations which those people have brought about, thinking that thereby they are engaging in a great act of Ibadah and participating in religious ceremonies (to celebrate the remembrance of some great event) is this that in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal they celebrate the Meelad, which celebration is constituted of many innovations and unlawful things. Among these are the participants sing songs and Ghazals while at the same time using musical instruments – drums, flutes, fiddles, etc. – and in this connection do many other evil actions which are customarily done mainly at those times which Allah Ta'ala has endowed with excellence and greatness (e.g. Eid and other occasions) and which are innovations wholly and totally, and are prohibited. There is no doubt that this kind of Sama, if it takes place on other nights apart from this, even then it would not be permissible. What then is the justification for holding such a Sama in this holy month, which Allah Almighty the Most Excellent has endowed with excellence and blessings in that His Beloved was born therein – such a Sama in which musical instruments are used? What relation can such a Sama have to this holy and blessed month, in which Allah (Exalted is His Majesty) granted us the great Ihsan of the auspicious birth of the Noble Prophet, the leader of those who are first and those who are last, (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam)? "Therefore, it is Wajib that special gratitude to Allah Ta'ala should be expressed in this month and as much Ibadah and charity

should be done as is possible, since He has bestowed on us this very great favour (that He caused the birth therein) of His beloved (servant) (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam). Even though the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) did not engage in more Ibadah in this month as compared with other months (nor did he command us to do so), yet in reality, this was due to his mercy and kindness to his Ummah, and also to create ease and mildness for them. This is why at times the Noble Prophet would leave off doing an action, lest it should become compulsory on his Ummah. This is the result of his mercy on us".

MERITS OF THE DAY OF THE MEELAD AND OF THE NOBLE PROPHET (SALLAL LAAHU ALAIHI WASALLAM)

"Nevertheless, the Noble Prophet has indicated the excellence of this great month in reply to a questioner. When he questioner wanted to find out about fasting on Mondays, the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) replied: 'That is the day on which I was born'. (**al-Hadith**) "Since the excellence of this day (i.e. Monday) implies the excellence of this month (i.e. Rabi-ul-Awwal) in which the Noble Prophet graced this world, then it is our duty to give this month its due respect and sanctity, and we should understand it to be very excellent just as Allah Ta'ala has deemed other blessed months to be very excellent. In this connection the Noble Prophet is reported to have said: 'I am the leader of the children of Adam and there is no pride (in this)'. 'Adam and all other (Prophets alaihimus-salaam) will be under my flag (on the Day of Judgement)'. "The merits and excellence of times and places are a result of those forms of Ibadah which are carried out therein, and by which Allah Ta'ala has specially favoured them. When it is known that times and places do not in themselves contain any honour and greatness accrues on account of those characteristics and distinctions (with which they have been granted exaltation), then reflect on this greatest favour of Allah Ta'ala, with which He has distinguished and ear-marked this blessed month, Rabi-ul-Awwal

Shareef and the day, Monday. Do you not see that fasting on Mondays has great merit because the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) was born on a Monday? "For this reason it is of the utmost appropriateness (and it behoves us to do so) that when this holy month comes, it should be treated with the exaltation, honour, esteem and respect it deserves. The example of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) should be followed in that in times endowed with special distinction, he himself used to perform the maximum possible acts of virtue and of charity, and he used to make special arrangements thereof. Have you not seen the following statement of Hazrat Ibn Abbas? 'The Messenger of Allah was the most generous of men and his generosity was the utmost in Ramadan'".

WHY IS RESPECT FOR RABI-UL-AWWAL ESSENTIAL?

(AND IN THIS CONNECTION THE REMOVAL OF A MISGIVING)

"For this reason, just as the Noble Prophet honoured those times endowed with distinction, we carry out this very duty in accordance with our capacity, in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal Shareef. If it be said that what the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) took upon himself in times of special distinction is known, but what he undertook in other months he did not do so in this month (i.e. Rabi-ul-Awwal Shareef) – then the answer is that it is well-known that the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) had this noble trait of wanting ease and relief for his Ummah, especially in those things concerning himself. Do you not see that the Noble Prophet, the leader of the world, (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) declared Madinah Munawwarah as sacred territory (Haram) just as Hazrat Ibrahim (alaihis-salaam) has declared Makkah Mukarramah to be, yet he did not fix any punishment for hunting, cutting down any tree, etc. in Madinah? – do you not see that he did this out of desiring ease and relief for his Ummah and out of mercy on them? "As it were, the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) used to consider what things

concerned his own self, and even though those things in themselves are of great merit, yet through desiring ease and relief for his Ummah, he used to abstain from them. The honouring of Rabi-ul-Awwal Shareef is of this category, that in it the maximum possible acts of virtue and charity should be done and he who cannot do so (i.e. for any reason is unable to perform these acts), at least he should abstain from all Haraam and Makruh things in this holy month, out of respect for it. Even though the abstention from all Haraam and Makruh things is required in other months as well, yet this month deserves the greatest respect. He should do so just as in Ramadan al-Mubarak and other sacred months, he remains careful to the utmost, abstains from misdeeds in religion and keeps away from other unsuitable things".

CRITICISM BY IBN AL-HAJ

"However, at the present time some people are acting contrary to this. When this blessed month comes they busy themselves with amusement and sport, using musical instruments. However, regretful it is that they make music and merriment and then entertain the assertion that they are showing respect for this blessed month!Leave aside the fact that they begin such Meelad celebrations with the recitation of the Holy Quran. They then, for the sensual delight of the Nafs, take resort to those who are expert at the art of creating restlessness and excitement in the emotions – which in itself contains many causes of corruption and destruction. "Yet they do not content themselves with that alone – but some of them add an even more dangerous thing in that the singer is young, handsome, mellow-voiced, well-attired and of a very pleasing appearance. He sings Ghazals, at the same time with crescendo and diminuendo in voice and ascent and descent in movements. Thus, he puts the audience, men and women into temptation. The result is that the two sides become prey to temptation and other many evils take the root. In some extreme cases, the husband-wife relationship is destroyed and it

even reaches the extent of separation between them at times. Thus, the period of destruction and ruin begins, in which a settled and complete home is destroyed and peace of mind and heart ruined. These evils are the result of that kind of Meelad celebration in which there is also a session of Sama". "Yes, if the Meelad Shareef is free from those evils (and that kind of Sama) – only food is prepared and in that ones Niyyah (intention) is of celebrating the Meelad and Muslim brethren are invited and in which those matters contrary to the Shari'ah and those blameworthy matters described above are abstained from – then it is an innovation merely on account of one's Niyyah (intention) because this is an accretion in the religion. Also the pious predecessors have not done it, and it is evident that it is better than more appropriate to follow the predecessors from none of whom has this been transmitted, nor has it been said of any of them that they made the Niyyah (intention) of celebrating the Meelad. We are their followers and are obligated to observe the same precepts as they were. (Thus, we should do only that which they did)".

GIST OF CRITICISM

The gist of the above quoted writing of Ibn al-Haj (radi Allahu anhu) is that he has not criticised the Meelad Shareef. **On the contrary, he has criticised those things which are Haraam and Makruh in the Shari'ah.** From the opening section it is clear that this holy month should be accorded a special status and it should be honoured and respected. The maximum possible acts of virtue should be done therein. One should try to surpass one's limits in doing acts of Ibadah, of charity and other virtuous acts. This is the method of celebrating the Meelad Shareef which he has deemed praiseworthy and commendable, because in that there is nothing but the recitation of the Holy Quran and an invitation to partake of food and drink – and these are the acts of goodness, meriting reward.

As far as his statement goes that this is an innovation – either it is in clear contradiction to what he said earlier (when Ibn al-Haj himself stressed honouring the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal), or it means that it is a good innovation (Bid'ah Hasanah) the elucidation of which was given earlier, or it means that the Meelad Shareef is a virtuous and praiseworthy act, and the innovation is the Niyyah (intention) of the Meelad, as he has suggested in his statement of his, then it will be an innovation merely on his account of his Niyyah (intention).

AN ACADEMIC EXAMINATION OF THIS

There remains the statement of Ibn al-Haj (radi Allahu anhu) that it has not been transmitted that any of the predecessors made the Niyyah (intention) of celebrating the Meelad. From this it is clear that he considered the Niyyah of celebrating the Meelad to be Makruh and that he did not deem the preparation of food and inviting Muslim brethren to partake thereof as Makruh (i.e. he also views the preparation of food and inviting Muslim brethren as not being Makruh). If this is examined closely, then it seems that this statement of his is not consistent with his earlier statements. This is due to the fact that he first taught the showing of gratitude to Allah Ta'ala in Rabi-ul-Awwal Shareef, and the engaging in the maximum acts of Ibadah and of charity and other virtuous acts therein since he caused His Beloved (Servant), (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) to be born in this holy month. The Niyyah (intention) of celebrating the Meelad Shareef means only this. Then how can something be criticised after doing it has been stressed? Abstract virtue, acts of Ibadah, of charity, etc. and other acts of goodness cannot be conceived of without a Niyyah (intention). And even it could be considered, then it couldn't be deemed Ibadah, nor can it earn any reward. This is because no action without an intention is (worthy of acceptance). And the Niyyah (intention) to celebrate the Meelad Shareef means only to demonstrate gratitude to Allah Ta'ala on the auspicious birth of the Noble Prophet

(sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) in Rabi-ul-Awwal. The intention of celebrating the Meelad Shareef means only this, and there is no doubt that this intention is commendable (i.e. it is a virtuous intention). Ponder on this well (and impress it on the mind well).

EXTRA-ORDINARY FORM OF THE MEELAD

After this Ibn al-Haj wrote: "There are some people who do not celebrate the Meelad solely for the purpose of demonstrating honour and respect. On the contrary, someone has some money in the possession of various people which he had given them on different occasions and ceremonies and now he wants to re-possess this money and is shy to ask for it. Therefore, he makes arrangement for the Meelad which becomes the cause for the recovery of his wealth which was in the hands of people.

"In this many types of corruption are found. One is that hypocrisy is found there – in his heart the opposite of what he outwardly shows is present. Outwardly he shows that he is celebrating the Meelad because he wants to gain benefits in the Hereafter, however in his heart that he should recover his money dispersed in the hands of people. "Some are such that they celebrate the Meelad in order to collect money or so that people may praise them (saying for example, 'Well done, brother!' or 'What good work you have done!') and join them to work (so that it may be evident from this how many people are with them). In these forms as well as the acts of corruption and destruction are not hidden".

REAL REASON FOR ABOMINABLENESS

The criticism by Ibn al-Haj (radi Allahu anhu) is also of that kind which has already been examined above. The blameworthy or evil aspect in it is based on the absence of pure Niyyah (intention), and not that in the Meelad Shareef itself there is to be found any evil or blameworthy aspect.

VIEWPOINTS OF SHAIKH AL-ISLAM IBN HAJAR

Shaikh al-Islam Abdul Fadl Ahmad Ibn Hajar (the Hafiz of the Age) (radi Allahu anhu) was asked about the Meelad Shareef. His reply was that the Meelad Shareef is, in fact, an innovation, which was not transmitted from any pious predecessor in the first three centuries. Nevertheless, both acts of virtue as well as acts of abomination are to be found in it (i.e. sometimes acts of virtue are found therein and sometimes acts of abomination). If in the Meelad Shareef only acts of virtue are done and acts of abomination are abstained from, then the Meelad Shareef is a Bid'ah Hasanah (a good innovation), otherwise not.

BASIS OF THE MEELAD SHAREEF

He has said that he found a strong basis for the Meelad Shareef in "Sahih al-Bukhari" and "Sahih Muslim". It is that when the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) migrated to Madinah, he saw the Jews fasting on Ashura (i.e. the 10th of Muharram). He enquired from them as to reason for this. They told him that Ashura is that day on which Allah Ta'ala has caused Pharaoh to drown, and granted Musa (alaihis-salaam) deliverance from him, and that they (the Jews) therefore fast (on that day) out of gratitude to Allah Ta'ala.

From this the proof is obtained of showing gratitude to Allah, and in that connection to do any virtuous act and to observe it annually as a means of recollection for any special day on which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed any favour or removed any calamity. Gratitude to Allah Ta'ala is expressed through different kinds of Ibadah – prostration and standing in prayer, charity and the recitation of the Holy Quran. And what greater favour of Allah Ta'ala can there be than the appearance of the Prophet of Mercy (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) on this day (i.e. 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal)? Therefore, this day should be specially observed so that consistency with the event concerning Hazrat Musa (alaihissalaam) on the day of Ashura, be attained. Some people do not limit it and celebrate the Meelad Shareef

on any day of Rabi-ul-Awwal. Nay, some have extended it even more and increased the period to the whole year. According to the latter, the Meelad Shareef can be celebrated on any day of the year. The objective here is the same (i.e. to rejoice at and celebrate the Holy birth of the Noble Prophet - sallal laahu alaihi wasallam). This discussion has been in connection with the basis of the Meelad Shareef.

IT'S BETTER TO REFRAIN FROM WHAT IS NOT MOST PREFERABLE

As far as those actions are concerned which are done in the Meelad Shareef it needs that one content oneself with only such actions through which gratitude through Allah Ta'ala is demonstrated in a proper manner. For example, the above-mentioned matters – recitation of the Holy Quran, invitation to partake of food, acts of charity, reciting verses in praise of the Leader of the two worlds (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and such verses through which hearts are moved towards acts of Ibadah and piety and through which there is motivation for bringing about acts of virtue and for working for the Hereafter.

Concerning those things belonging to the category of Sama and amusement and song ... and which happen to be within the sphere of permissibility and through which joy is expressed on that day – if such things are done there is no evil therein. And those things belonging to the categories of Haraam and Makruh they should be guarded against. Similarly, those things which are inconsistent with what is Awla (most preferable) and which are not appropriate such things should be abandoned.

ANOTHER BASIS FOR THE MEELAD SHAREEF

I submit that I have also found another basis for the Meelad Shareef in the Hadith Shareef (literature). It is that al-Baihaqi transmits from Hazrat Anas (radi Allahu anhuma) that the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) performed his own Aqiqa in the period after the proclamation of Prophethood. This was in spite of the fact that his grandfather, Hazrat Abdul Muttalib (radi Allahu anhu), had already performed the Aqiqa on the seventh day after the birth, and Aqiqa is done only once and is not done a second time.

From this it is understood that the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) did this to show his gratitude to Allah Ta'ala for causing him to be born, having made him "the mercy unto all the worlds". The objective was also to create a precedent in the Shari'ah for the Ummah – just as the Noble Prophet himself (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) used to recite Darud Shareef on his own self in order to create a principal in the Shari'ah for that act of showing honour and esteem to him. Therefore, it is commendable (Mustahab) that we arrange for the Meelad Shareef to show our gratitude (to Allah Ta'ala) for the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), in which the invitation to food and drink is there and other similar acts of virtue are done and which occasion is celebrated with happiness.

IBN AL-JAZARI'S FAITH-ENKINDLING PROOF

I came across the book of the Imam of Qurra Shams al-Din Ibn al-Jazari (radi Allahu anhu) entitled "Urf al-Ta'arif bil Mawlid al-Sharif" in which he writes that after the death of Abu Lahab someone saw him in a dream and enquired from him as to his condition. He said that punishment is being meted out. However, on the night of Monday, there is some relaxation in his punishment and he manages to suck some water from his finger (so saying, he indicated the finger) because it was through a gesture of that finger that he set his female slave Thuwaibah free when

she conveyed to him the good news of the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and that she had the privilege of suckling him. Consider! If this Abu Lahab, a Kafir whose censure has come in the Holy Quran also – if he has been rewarded for his expression of the joy at the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), what will be the condition of that Muslim, the sincere upholder of Tawhid from his Ummah who express joy at the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and spends whatsoever is possible for him, out of love for the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam)? By my life! His reward will be that Allah the most Noble, out of his comprehensive Grace will place him in the gardens of Bliss.

AL-DIMASHQI'S SOUL-ENRICHING NAATH ON THE MEELAD

Hafiz Shams al-Din Ibn Nasir al-Din al-Dimashqi (radi Allahu anhu) has written in his book "Mawrid al-Sadi fi Mawlid al-Hadi": "It is established in Sahih Ahadith that punishment is lessened for Abu Lahab every Monday because he said Thuwaibah free out of joy and happiness at the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam). After this he wrote the following lines of poetry:

*When this is a Kafir and his censure has come (in the Quran)
Perish his hands in the fire of Hell forever
It has been narrated that always on a Monday
(His punishment) is lessened because of his happiness at (the birth of)
Ahmad*

*What is the view then about the servant (of Allah) whospent his whole life
Being happy at (the birth of) Ahmad and died an upholderof Tawhid?"*

PRACTICE OF A SHEIKH OF A TARIQAH

Kamal Adfiri states in "al-Tali al-Sa'id" that his reliable and trustworthy friend Nasir al-Din Mahmud Ibn al-Imad related that Abu al-Tayyib Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim al-Sibti al-Maliki, a resident of Tus and one of the pious Ulama, used to pass by the Madrassah on the birthday of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and say, "O Jurist! Today is the day of Eid. Give the students a holiday and send them home". Thus they used to give them a holiday Islamic and send them home. This is evidence of his confirmation and absence of rejection. This gentlemen was a famous Jurist of the Maliki School of Law, who had a command over many branches of knowledge and was a God-conscious and pious elder. Abu Hayyan and others have transmitted narrations from him. He passed away in the year 695 A.H.

CONCLUSION

Ibn al-Haj has written that if it is questioned as to wisdom in the birth of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) being in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal and on Monday not in the month of Ramadaan al-Sharif, which is the month of the sending down of the Quran and in which Lailatul-Qadr is found, nor in any of the sacred months nor on the fifteenth of Shabaan al-Mu'azzam, nor on Friday, nor on the night of Friday – then the reply can be given from four angles:

- (1)** It has been transmitted in Hadith literature that Allah Ta'ala created the trees on a Monday. In this there is great admonition and that is that on a Monday Allah Ta'ala created food, sustenance, fruits and the things given in charity. Mankind's growth development and livelihood are closely connected with these and men's selves get joy from them.
- (2)** In the word Rabi' from the point of view of its etymology, a good indication and a virtuous omen is found. Abu al-Rahman al-Saqli states that for every man his name is a part for him (i.e. his name has effects on his body).
- (3)** The reason of Rabi' (i.e. spring) is the most moderate and beautiful of all the seasons. And the Shari'ah of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) is the most moderate and the easiest among all the Shara'i.
- (4)** Allah, the All-Knowing and All-Wise, wanted to bestow eminence on that time in which the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) entered this world. Had he been born in any of the above-mentioned sanctified times, then the illusion may have arisen that the nobility and eminence of the Noble Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) are on account of those sanctified times.

The seventh chapter of the book "**Ad Durrul Munazzam**" is devoted to a rebuttal of the arguments of those who oppose Meelaad Shareef or can do so. The book by Maulana Abdul Haq Muhaddis Allahabaadi which gives the names of prominent persons who have justified the holding of Meelaad Shareef. The names of such persons and of the books written by them are in the order in which Maulana Abdul Haq has given them.

01. Maulana Muhammad Salaamat ul Laah, (Ishbaa'il Kalaam Fi Isbaatil Mauladi Wal Qiyaam).
02. Imam Abu Muhammad Abdur Rahmaan Bin Ismaiel, popularly known as Ibne Shaamah, (Al-Musannaf, Al-Baa 'is 'Alaa Inkaaril Bid 'a wal Hawaadis).
03. Allamah Muhammad Bin Yoosuf Shaami; (Subulal Huda War Rashaad Fi Seerati Khairil Ibaad, Seerat-e-Shaami).
04. Allamah Imaam Jalaal-ud-deen Suyooti; Misbaahuz Zujaajah Ala Sunane Ibne Maajah, Husnul Maqsad Fi Amalel Maulad)
05. Imaam Haafiz Abul Khair Shamsudud-deen Al Jazri; (At Ta'reef Bil Mauladish Shareef).
06. Allamah Shaikh Abul Khattaab Bin Umar Bin Hasan Kalbi, popularly known as Ibne Dehyah Undlus; (Semaahut Tanweer Fi Mauladil Basheeri Wan Nazeer).
07. Imaam Naasir-ud-deen Al-Mubaarak, popularly known as Ibne Battaah; (in fatwa).
08. Imaam Jamaal-ud-deen Bin Abdur Rahmaan Bin Abdul Malik.
09. Imaam Zaheer-ud-deen Bin Ja'far; (in Fatwa).
10. Allamah Shaikh Naseer-ud-deen Tayaalesi; (in Fatwa).
11. Imaam Sadr-ud-deen Mauhoob Ash Shaafi'ee; (in Fatwa).
12. Imaam Muhaddis Ibae Jauzi. (Al-Maulad)
13. Imaam Mulla Ali Qaari Hanafi; (Al-Muredur Rawi Fi Maulidin Nabawi).
14. Imaam Shams-ud-deen Sakhaavi.

15. Allamah Shaikh Shah Abdul Haq Muhaddis Dehlvi; (Ma Sabata MinasSunnah, Madaarijun Nubawwah).
16. Allamah Shah Waliyyul Laah Muhaddis Dehlvi; (Ad Durrus Sameen, Fuyoozul Haramain, Al-Intibaah).
17. Shah Ismaiel Dehlvi; (in Fatwa).
18. Allamah Muhammad Ishaaq; ('in Fatwa).
19. Allamah Jamaal-ud-deen Mirza Ahsan Lukhnawi; (in Fatwa).
20. Mufti Muhammad Sa'dul Laah; (in Fatwa).
21. Allamah Shaikh Jamaalul Fatanee Hanafi, Mufti of Makkah (in Fatwa).
22. Allamah Shahaab-ud-deen Khifaa ji; (Risaalah Amalal Maulad)
23. Allamah Abdur Rahmaan Siraaj Bin Abdul Laah Hanafi, Mufti of Makkah (in Fatwa).
24. Allamah Abu Bakr Hajji Basiuni Maaliki, Mufti of Makkah. (in Fatwa)
25. Allamah Muhammad Rahmatul Laah, Mufti of Makkah (in Fatwa).
26. Allamah Muhammad Sa'eed Bin Ba Basaiyl Shaafi'ee, Mufti of Makkah (in Fatwa).
27. Allamah Khalf Bin Ibreaheem Hanbaly, Mufti of Makkah (in Fatwa).
28. Shah Abdul Ghani Naqshbandi (Shifaa us Saa'il).
29. Allamah Haafiz Shamsuddeen Ibne Naasir-UD-deen Damishqi; (Jaami'ul Aasaar Fi Maulidin Nabiyil Mukhtaar, Al Lafzur Raa'iq, Mauredus Saavi Fi Maulidil Haadi).
30. Allamah Abu Abdul Laah Muhammad Zurqaani; (Sharah Mawanhib).
31. Allamah Shah Abdul Azeez Dehlvi.
32. Shah Rafee-ud-deen Dehlvi.
33. Imaam-e-Rabbani Mujaddid Alfe Saani Shaikh Ahmad Faarooqi Sehrandi(Maktoo baat).
34. Maulana Muhammad Mazhar; (Maqaamate Sa'eediyah).
35. Maulana Karaamat Ali Jaunpuri; (Risaalatul Faisalah).
36. Imam Badr-ud-deen Aeini; (Umdatul Qaari Sharah Bukhari).

The Permissibility of Celebrating Milad-un-Nabi

01. Meelad-un-Nabi or Moulood-un-Nabi or Mawlid is the Birth Celebration of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam).
02. Some people have declared Meelad-un-Nabi to be Haraam and an evil Bid'at because they say that the celebration of birthdays and anniversaries have no connection with Islam as this is an exclusive custom of the Kuffaar. They say: "in upholding these innovative customs, Muslims are in fact imitating the Kuffaar and this our Nabi (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) has strictly forbidden".
03. What takes place in a Meelad celebration? In such a celebration a session of Naat (Poems in praise of Rasoolullah - sallal laalhu alaihi wasallam) recitals take place, people are fed, and a sincere effort is made to fill the hearts of Muslims with the love of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam). The miracles, excellences and the character of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) are mentioned in Meelad gatherings. The Meelad functions presents one with one of the best means of learning about Rasoolullah's (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) life.
04. The gatherings of Meelad-un-Nabi are a great means for calling people towards Allah Ta'ala. To mention the Holy Prophet Muhammad (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) in the month of his birth should be increased so that the people could arrange gatherings and congregations to refresh the memories of the Nabawi period.
05. It is a requirement of the Holy Quran to show respect on the Meelad of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam). Allah Ta'ala says: "In the bounty of Allah Almighty and His Mercy, in that, let them rejoice, that is better than the wealth they accumulate". (Surah Yunus: 58) Almighty Allah had ordered us to rejoice on His Mercy

and Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) is the greatest Mercy of Allah Ta'ala to all the Worlds.

06. In the time of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), the period of the Sahabah and in the period of the Tabi'in, Meelad was not celebrated as it is done in the present form. But the Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam), Sahabah or Tabi'in did not prohibit it as well. This is an accepted principle of Shari'ah that the performance of something is proof of Jawaaz (permissibility), and not doing it is NOT the proof of its prohibition.
07. The Meelad celebration is not compulsory. It is Mustahab (recommended). Imam Jalaaluddin Suyuti (radi Allahu anhu) said that it is Mustahab for us to celebrate Meelad of the Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) as to thank Allah. (Ruhul Bayaan)
08. All the Ulema and Muslims of all the countries have regarded Meelad as Mustahab (recommended). According to the Hadith of Hazrat Ibn Masood (radi Allahu anhu), whichever deed is regarded as good by Muslims is good by Almighty Allah as well, and whichever deed is regarded as evil by Muslims is evil by Almighty Allah as well. Imam Ahmed (radi Allahu anhu) has narrated this Hadith Shareef.
09. Although the present form of Meelad is a Bid'ah (innovation) (Bid'ah Hasanah or Good Innovation), but the origin of Meelad is found in the time of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihiwasallam). Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) himself made mention of his own Meelad by saying, "I am the Du'a of my father Hazrat Ebrahim (alaihis salaam), I am the good tidings of 'Isa (alaihis salaam), and I am the son of the two slaughtered ones (Hazrat Ismail - alaihis salaam and Hazrat Abdullah - radi Allahu anhu)."
10. The Holy Prophet's (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) uncle and an arch enemy of Islam, Abu Lahab, set his slave Thuwaiba free being happy for the Meelad of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam). Abu Lahab's punishment is made light every Monday as

a reward of his act, i.e. of expressing happiness for the birth of the Holy Prophet (Bukhari Shareef)

11. When the assembly of Zikr of the beloved Rasool (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) takes place, a Muslim is happy and joyful, therefore, he invites people to partake in the food provided, he gives charity and distributes sweatmeats. To feed people after an important or virtuous deed is the practice of the Sahaba.
12. It is Sunnah to commemorate happiness. Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) was asked about fasting on a Monday. He replied, "I was born on that day and Wahi (Revelation) began upon me on that day." (Mishkat) It is now proven that to keep fast on a Monday is Sunnah because Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) was born on that day.
13. Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) used to respect the day of his own Meelad. He used to thank Allah Ta'ala for that great favour. He used to fast in order to respect that day.
14. Meelad celebration causes the recitation of Durood and Salaam. Durood and Salaam are required by Shari'ah.
15. When certain of the Sahabah used to recite the praises of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) in poetry form, Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) used to rejoice and reward those Sahabah. In the Meelad function, the character and virtues of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) are explained and his praises are recited in poetry and prose form.
16. To mention the miracles and character of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) leads towards love and the completion of Iman with him, which is required by the Shari'ah.
17. Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) expressed the virtues of Jummah (Friday) by saying that Hazrat Adam (alaihis salaam) was born on that day. Therefore, imagine the virtue of that day when Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) was born!

18. Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) said that anyone who invented a good deed and people later practiced upon it, they will be rewarded. Meelad is a good deed.
19. Allah Ta'ala says in the Holy Quran: "And all that We relate to you of the tiding of the Messengers is for the purpose of strengthening your heart therewith". (Surah Hud: 20) We are in need of strengthening our hearts with the mentioning of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and other Prophets (alaihihiimus salaam) and the Meelad gives us this opportunity.
20. Hazrat Imam Shafi'i (radi Allahu anhu) said: "Any thing which opposes (or changes) the Quraan, Sunnah, Ijma (consensus) or the sayings of the Sahabah is Bid'ah. Any good deed which is not opposed to them is praiseworthy". (Meelad celebration does not oppose any of them)
21. As in the practices of Haj, the running between Safa and Marwa are legal in order to refresh the remembrance of pious people. Similarly, the celebration of Meelad-un-Nabi is also legal to refresh the remembrance of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam).
22. Hazrat Moulana Abdus Sammi' (radi Allahu anhu) has counted 73 names of great scholars of Islam who wrote about the validity of Meelad celebrations. (Anwaare Saati'a)
23. Allama Jalaaluddin Suyuti (radi Allahu anhu) writes: "The Shari'ah commanded Aqeeqah on the birth (of a child). This is a way to thank Allah and rejoice, but on the time of death no such commandment has been given. In fact, mourning and grieving is prohibited. The same principle of Shari'ah demands that happiness and the joy should be expressed in Rabi-ul-Awwal on the birth of the beloved Rasool (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and not grieve on his Wisaal (Departure from this world)". (Husnul Maqsad Fee Amalil Moulid Al Haawi Lil Fataawa)

24. Imam Suyuti (radi Allahu anhu) writes about Meelad: "According to me, gatherings, recitations of the Quran, mentioning incidents of the holy life of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) and mentioning those signs which appear at the time of his birth are amongst the good innovations in which a person is rewarded because in this there is respect, love and expression of happiness for the arrival of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam)". (Al Haavi Lil Fataawa)
25. Imam Qastalaani (radi Allahu anhu) writes: "In the month of the birth of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) Muslims always had assemblies. In the nights of that month they gave charities and expressed happiness. They always increased good deeds in those nights. They always made arrangements to read the Meelad of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) with the auspicious (hope) that Allah Ta'ala showers His blessings upon them. One of the experienced Barakah (blessing) of Meelad is that the year passes upon them peacefully. May Allah Ta'ala send His Blessings and Favour upon that person who took Meelaad-un-Nabi as Eid, so this Eid should become reason of hardness upon that person who has disease in his heart". (Mawahe bul Le Dunya)
26. Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Delwi (radi Allahu anhu) writes: "All Muslims have always celebrated Meelad functions in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal. They always gave charities in the nights of that month and expressed their happiness. This is a common practice of Muslims that they particularly make mention of those incidents which are related to the birth of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam)". (Ma Sabata Bis Sunnah)
27. Mullah Ali Qari (radi Allahu anhu) writes: "Firstly, we see that it is permissible to arrange an assembly of Meelad. It is permissible to participate in that assembly for the purpose of listening to the praises and character of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam)."

Inviting people and expressing happiness is permissible. Secondly, we do not say that it is Sunnah to celebrate Meelad on any fixed night. Anyone who believes that it is Sunnah to celebrate Meelad on any fixed night (and not in any other night) is a Bid'ati because the Zikr of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) is required all the time. Yes, in the month in which Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) was born, has more preference". (Al Mouridur-ravi fil Moulidin Nabi)

28. Allama Ibn Abedeen Shami (radi Allahu anhu) writes: "Every person who is truthful in the love of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) should express happiness in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal. He should arrange an assembly for the Meelad of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) in which the incidents of his birth are explained with correct Ahadith. There is a strong hope from Allah that such a person will be included in the group of pious people with the intercession of Rasoolullah (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam)". (Jawahi Rul Bihaar)
29. We do not fix a particular day or night for the Meelad and believe that Meelad is not Ja'iz (permissible) on any other date. It is our view that whosoever does such an act does so out of ignorance because the love and the relation to the Holy Prophet (sallal laahu alaihi wasallam) demands that one should always mention him continuously.
30. No Muslim ever regards the Meelad function as being more important than Salaah.
31. Music or Qawwali is not sung at a Meelad. If anyone has Qawwali with music in a Meelad function then he or she should be stopped and told that it is not correct.
32. If Na-Baligh (immature) boys and girls read in Meelad functions, there is nothing wrong with that. Baaligha (mature) girls do not read at all in Meelad functions. If in any function a Baaligha girl

reads a Naat in front of the audience, that will not make the Meelad Haraam. Rather, people should be told about the illegitimacy of this act. The reading of Baligh boys in front of an audience is Ja'iz (permissible). There is no proof in Shar'iah against it unconditionally.

33. Women sit in Meelad gatherings separate from men with necessary Shari' Hijab. The Shari' limit of Hijab for women is that they must cover the whole body besides the face, both hands and feet. Their hair must be covered and the clothes must not be so thin that the colour of the body may be seen. In the light of the Holy Quran, Hadith and Fiqh it is not compulsory for woman to cover the face, hands and feet from a Ghair Mahram.

(N.B.: It is Mustahab for women to cover the whole face and not Waajib)